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**DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIP CO-OPERATION IN STUDENT EXCHANGE
WITH ITALIAN UNIVERSITIES**

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<p>The purpose of this Bachelor Thesis was to obtain different methods to develop international partnership co-operation in student exchange between Kajaani University of Applied Sciences and Italian universities. The thesis was commissioned by the International Office of Kajaani UAS which is responsible for internationality in education provided by Kajaani UAS.</p> <p>Theoretical framework of the thesis consisted of internationality in Finnish higher education institutions in general as well as on practical level in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. Strategies for internationalisation were introduced and activities related to internationalisation of Kajaani UAS were described more specifically. Another theme for theoretical background was comparison of the Finnish and Italian education systems including both pre-higher education level and higher education level.</p> <p>Different sources used to gather information to develop partnership co-operation in student exchange between Kajaani University of Applied Sciences and Italian universities included new potential partnership universities, current partnership universities, Italian authorities involved in education and internationality as well as former Italian exchange students who had studied in Kajaani UAS. These sources were contacted by email and/or by phone.</p> <p>As for results of the thesis, there were several opportunities discovered to develop partnership co-operation with Italian universities. Further contacts with a new potential partnership university should be made regarding academic year 2011-2012 as well as observe the situation with a current partnership university in L'Aquila in the future. Implementation of the Bologna Process was discovered to be seriously considered within Italian universities especially in relation to integration of European Higher Education Area. However, the amount of courses in tourism studies in English language on Bachelor level in universities participating in the Erasmus Exchange Programme did not fully cover the needs of the student exchange development process.</p>	
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**Kajaanin
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OPINNÄYTETYÖ TIIVISTELMÄ

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<p>Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli kehittää korkeakoulu yhteistyötä opiskelijavaihdon suhteen Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulun ja italialaisten korkeakoulujen välillä. Opinnäytetyön toimeksiantajana oli Kajaanin AMK:n kv-toimisto, joka vastaa koulutuksen kansainvälisyysmahdollisuuksista Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulussa.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyön teoriaosuus koostui kansainvälistyvän oppimisympäristön tarkastelusta sekä yleisellä tasolla Suomen korkeakoulutuksessa että käytännön tasolla Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulussa. Sekä Opetusministeriön korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategia että Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulun kansainvälistymisstrategia esiteltiin ja Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulun kansainvälistymismahdollisuudet opiskelija- ja harjoittelijavaihdon puitteissa kuvailtiin tarkemmin.</p> <p>Lähteinä opiskelijavaihdon kehittämiseen käytettiin uusia mahdollisia yhteistyökorkeakouluja, nykyisiä yhteistyökorkeakouluja, Erasmus-opiskelijaverkostoa, Italian koulutuksesta ja kansainvälisyydestä vastaavia viranomaisia sekä Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulussa opiskelijavaihdon suorittaneita italialaisia vaihto-opiskelijoita. Lähteisiin otettiin yhteyttä sähköpostilla ja/tai puhelimitse.</p> <p>Tulokset osoittivat, että uuteen mahdolliseen yhteistyökorkeakouluun Italiassa on suositeltavaa olla yhteydessä yhteistyökumppanuuden suhteen lukuvuodelle 2011-2012. Nykyisen Italian yhteistyökorkeakoulun, L'Aquilan yliopiston tilannetta on syytä tarkkailla myöhemmin, mikäli opiskelijoiden asuntotilanne paranee sekä englanninkielisten kurssien määrä lisääntyy lähivuosina. Bolognan prosessin toteuttaminen Italian korkeakouluissa on hyvin huomioitu koulutusjärjestelmän yhtenäistämisen suhteen. Englanninkielisten kurssien tarjonta Erasmus-vaihtoon osallistuvilla korkeakouluilla, etenkin matkailualan Bachelor-tasolla ei kuitenkaan ollut riittävä tähän opiskelijavaihdon kehittämiseen.</p>	
Kieli	englanti
Asiasanat	
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PREFACE

The background for the idea of this Bachelor thesis was my own passion to go to Italy on student exchange on my second year of studies in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. Since there was not a recommended partnership university available for student exchange in Italy, I chose to go to the Netherlands but completed my practical training in Italy. The combination of my own experience in participating in student exchange and working in Italy helped me remarkably through this thesis. Hopefully students of Kajaani UAS will be able to choose Italy as their destination to go on student exchange in the future.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CIMEA	Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence (Italy)
CINECA	Interuniversity Consortium
CIMO	Centre for International Mobility (Finland)
CRUI	Conference of Italian University Rectors
EAIE	European Association for International Education
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EEA	European Economic Area
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EPS	European Policy Statement
ESN	Erasmus Student Network
ERASMUS	European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
KAMO	Student Union of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences
KELA	Social Insurance Institution of Finland
MIUR	Ministry of Education, University and Research (Italy)
LLP	Lifelong Learning Programme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
UAS	University of Applied Sciences

1 INTRODUCTION

Internationalisation has become a part of daily life for many people around the world. Moving to a foreign country has been made more accessible in today's world especially in the European Union due to free movement of European citizens within the Union countries. Nowadays people have also in general become more curious and interested in different cultures and languages. Furthermore, the current needs of working life often require ability and experience in working in a multicultural team.

Nearly all higher education institutions in Finland provide opportunities for student exchange abroad. By participating in student exchange it is possible for students to personally develop themselves not only educationally but also by learning to cope with new, unfamiliar people and environment. The courage required to leave student's home country for a semester or two is worth the experience of exploring a new foreign country and its people which often has a life-long lasting effect on the student's life.

Italy was one of the first four countries engaged to create European Higher Education Area (EHEA) on the Bologna Declaration in 1999 and ever since the Bologna Process has been implemented all over Europe. Italy has taken an active role in integrating the university education system according to the standards of the Bologna Process. Furthermore, it is ranked among the eight most industrialised countries in the world (MIUR) in addition to being the fifth most popular international tourism destination (UNTWO 2008). Therefore, choosing Italy as a country for student exchange is an interesting opportunity to learn about the education, culture and the way of life of the Italians.

2 INTERNATIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Internationality and multicultural environment have become a remarkable and an essential part of the Finnish society since the late 1980's. Numerous Finnish companies nowadays follow the advantages of international operational environment and they have also increased making productive investments abroad. (Garam 2005, 5.) Today even several Finnish companies operate overseas or employ international staff and therefore, not only working abroad but also working in today's Finland often requires foreign language skills and knowledge for different cultures.

Internationality has been one area of emphasis of the politics of higher education institutions since the late 1980's. Internationalisation in education is shown especially by the increase of student exchange and practical training abroad. (Garam 2005, 6.) Furthermore, Finnish higher education institutions have nowadays become more multicultural with students coming from all over the world.

The international mobility of students has so far been the most viable characteristic defining internationalisation of higher education institutions. However, the actual internationalisation of these institutions is a broader concept than only the mobility – internationalisation of higher education institutions is perceived as a process where the international dimension is integrated as a part of education, research and service activities of higher education institutions. (Garam 2005, 8.)

Internationalisation includes many different elements which are divided into academic and organisational elements. Academic elements include mobility programmes, developing of curriculum and study contents and co-operation with other parties outside institutions. Organisational elements include planning on strategic level, administration practices and services supporting the international dimension of institution. (Garam 2005, 8.)

There are four types of arguments which have been used to justify internationalisation of higher education institutions: educational, economical, cultural and political. Educational arguments are based on improving and ensuring the quality of education with the help of internationalisation. Economic reasons include ensuring competitiveness and economical

growth as well as the need for educated labour force. With cultural arguments internationalisation is motivated by the knowledge and understanding of foreign cultures and languages – not to forget presenting also the local culture. Finally, political reasons refer to the facts that internationality promotes peace, solidarity and tolerance. (Garam 2005, 8.)

2.1 Internationality in Finnish Higher Education Institutions

Internationality has become a part of daily life also in Finnish higher education institutions. Although these institutions have always been international, especially during the last two decades greater steps have been taken towards internationalisation. (Leppiaho et al. 2009, 7.) By building international networks, higher education institutions and above all, their students and staff improve the potential of their own field of knowledge, the quality of their know-how, base of resources and ability to participate in international working field (Leppiaho et al. 2009, 14).

Although the universities of applied sciences operate actively all over the world, the widest co-operation is still within European countries. Nowadays the new areas of international co-operation are also located in Asia and Russia as well as in North and South America. (Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences 2009).

The main aim of the international affairs is to increase and support the international skills of the students, teachers and other personnel. The international activities are implemented in co-operation of education, research, working life and the surrounding society. The most important forms of action are mobility of students and teachers, courses taught in foreign languages, home internationalisation and international education, research and development projects. (Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences 2009).

In 1999, ministers of education in 29 European countries signed an agreement to harmonise the European higher education degree systems. This is called the Bologna Process of which ultimate goal is to create an integrated European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by the year 2010. More specifically, the Bologna Process aims at international mobility for studying or working purposes, integrated degree structures and credits (ECTS, European Credit

Transfer System) as well as attractiveness of European higher education so that people from non-European countries also arrive to study or work in Europe. (CIMO 2008.)

The building of the European Higher Education Area and the requirements followed by it are an essential part of international activities. When the targets set by the Bologna Process are reached, EHEA is more competitive and attractive compared to other parts of the world. Finnish higher education system has adopted the two-cycle degree structure and ECTS due to the Bologna Process. (Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences 2009).

The current challenge for higher education institutions now is to improve their research and development activities regarding international connections. If these operations will be successful, the results will also be able to be seen on teaching and on the know-how of the staff. (Leppiaho et al. 2009, 7.)

2.1.1 Strategy for Internationalisation in Higher Education Institutions

The Ministry of Education in Finland has prepared the higher education institution internationalisation strategy for the period of 2009-2015. The strategy was planned by using an open and interactive methodology; students, personnel, business community and other stakeholders were requested to present their views on the subject. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 6.) The strategy has set guidelines for the internationalisation in higher education institutions with five primary aims:

A genuinely international higher education community

Possibility to study and work in an international operating environment is provided by the Finnish higher education. The quality of research and education as well as the internationalisation of students are improved by international experience and connections of the personnel. International co-operation opportunities are actively utilised especially within the EU and the Nordic countries. Furthermore, the amount of non-Finnish teachers, degree students and researchers has increased tremendously by 2015. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 10.)

Increasing the quality and attractiveness of higher education institutions

The Finnish higher education institutions are internationally attractive work and study environments – they support competitiveness, internationalisation and well-being of the whole society. High quality education and research as well as the opportunities concerning working life in Finland are the core competences to attract non-Finnish students and researchers to come to Finland. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 10-11.)

Promoting the export of expertise

High-quality and mutually beneficial international research, education and cultural co-operation make Finnish higher education institutions reliable and attractive co-operation partners. Thus, higher education and expertise are nationally significant exports which are utilised also outside Finland. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 11.)

Supporting a multicultural society

Taking part in supporting the multicultural higher education community and civil society is an operation which higher education institutions actively aim at. Internationalisation at home requires such resources as people with immigrant backgrounds and foreign exchange as well as degree students, researchers and other foreign personnel. The share of students with immigrant backgrounds in higher education corresponds to their share of the whole population. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 11.)

Promoting global responsibility

Research and expertise of Finnish higher education institutions are utilised to solve global problems and to improve competence in developing countries. The activities of these institutions are ethically sustainable and support prerequisites of students to operate in a global environment and to understand the global effects of their activities. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 11.)

2.1.2 Goals for International Mobility in Higher Education Institutions

Ministry of Education has compiled goals for international mobility of students and trainees as well as teachers and experts in universities of applied sciences until the year 2015. Furthermore, there is also a separate goal for the number of non-Finnish degree students in higher education institutions. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 30.)

According to the goal set, the number of incoming students and trainees in universities of applied sciences should be nearly twice (8000) the amount of the year 2007 (4418), whereas regarding outgoing students and trainees there is only little need for improvement from the figures of 2007 (7178) to the goal of 2015 (8000). The goal for incoming teacher and expert mobility for 2015 is 3000, while from the year 2007 there is rather a vast need for improvement from the amount of 1689. The number of outgoing teachers and experts instead was 3252 in 2007 which is only slightly less than the goal for the year 2015 (4000). Furthermore, the amount of non-Finnish degree students should nearly be doubled (20 000) for 2015 since it appeared to be only 11 303 in 2007. (Ministry of Education 2009b, 30.)

See table 1.

Mobility goals	2015	2007
The number of non-Finnish degree students in higher education institutions	20 000	11303
Student and trainee mobility in universities of applied sciences		
incoming	8000	4418
outgoing	8000	7178
Teacher and expert mobility in universities of applied sciences		
incoming	3000	1689
outgoing	4000	3252

Table 1. Mobility goals for 2015

The aim of the development plan of education and research is to further increase the volume of student exchange and also the amount of international students in Finnish

education institutions (Garam 2005, 5). The goal of increasing student mobility and international co-operation is to improve the quality of education and support intercultural communication and understanding. On the other hand, the Finnish society and working life need international knowledge as well. (Garam 2005, 5.)

2.2 Internationality in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences

Internationality is an essential part of all forms of education provided in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. Students of Kajaani UAS are able to complete a part of their studies abroad in partner institutions or go for practical training abroad. The main principle requires that after first year of studies (45 credits with basic studies completed) students are able to go on student exchange and basically after two years of studies complete practical training abroad, depending on the degree programme studied. In addition, students studying Business, International Business or Tourism are provided an opportunity to complete a double degree at Kajaani UAS's partner institution, Hochschule in Heilbronn, Germany. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a).

Kajaani University of Applied Sciences provides an opportunity for internationalisation also without going abroad. It is possible to develop internationality by attending lectures given by foreign visiting lecturers from partnership institutions as well as gain international experiences by participating in tutoring for foreign degree students and exchange students arriving to Kajaani UAS. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a).

All fields of education of Kajaani UAS have their own International Co-ordinator who takes care of international affairs besides teaching. Students interested in international issues are able to contact the co-ordinator of their own field or the staff of the International Office. More information can be found from Foreign Exchange Guide 2009-2010 for international students or from the Finnish guide 'Matkaopas maailmalle 2009-2010' on the website of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a.)

There is a slight variation yearly in the amount of students taking part in student exchange abroad. Therefore, it is rather difficult to predict the future trends of outgoing student exchange. The year 2001 was the highest peak for Kajaani UAS (13,8 %) and on the national

level the percentage was nearly similar (13,6 %). In comparison, in 2007 there was a vast difference with the amount of outgoing students of Kajaani UAS having only 5,7 % (despite the fact the amount of new students had increased from 420 to 576). The same year, the whole Finland had 11,6 % of outgoing students. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009b, 3). See figure 1.

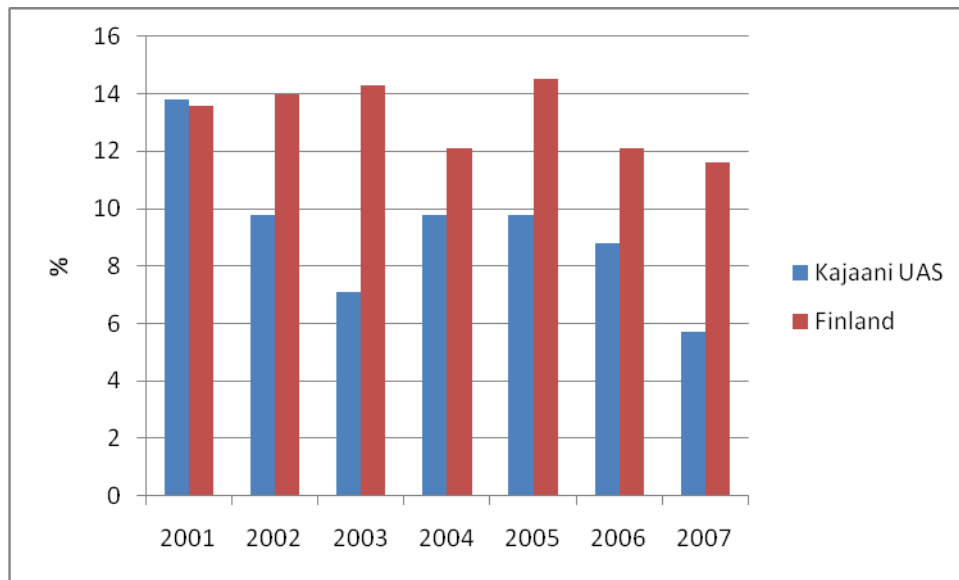


Figure 1. Outgoing student mobility from Finland to abroad in years 2001-2007

2.2.1 Strategy for Internationalisation in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences

Goals for international activities of Kajaani UAS are raising the amount and quality of student and expert exchange, increasing the international research and development activities and deepening co-operation as well as enhancing internationalisation at home. One of the strategic goals is to help business, companies and public administration to internationalise themselves. Another goal is to increase the amount of education provided in English language on professional studies on all fields of education. The goal of pedagogic strategy is to make internationalisation to be a regular part of the activity system of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. Furthermore, the institution is also responsible for internationalisation of its students and staff as well as participating in international projects. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009b, 3.)

To implement the goals set, Kajaani University of Applied Sciences develops new degree programmes in English and increases the amount of teaching in English. In autumn 2009, Kajaani UAS had three degree programmes fully taught in English: Degree Programme in International Business, Degree Programme in Tourism and Degree Programme in Sports and Leisure Management. All students are able to take part in the courses of degree programmes provided in English. Moreover, students may also utilise virtual Asian studying periods provided by collaboration networks of East and Southeast Asia. Kajaani University of Applied Sciences provides language training for its staff and takes language proficiency into account when hiring new staff. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009b, 4.)

To boost the amount and quality of student and expert exchange Kajaani University of Applied Sciences begins to plan student exchange regarding entire student groups – in other words, all students of a certain group would go on exchange at least for three months to one of partnership institutions of Kajaani UAS. Other procedures are to go through such partnership institutions which have resources to help finding practical training placements and maintain contacts with training places in which there have already previously been students completing their practical training abroad. One essential operation is to continue finding new partnership schools but above this to deepen co-operation with current partner institutions. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009b, 5-6.)

To promote internationalisation at home, Kajaani University of Applied Sciences will increase the co-operation between international and Finnish students and staff. Also co-operation with the Student Union KAMO will be continued and developed further since KAMO is responsible for recruiting tutors for both international and Finnish students as well for developing student activities. Students are also encouraged to take part in international tutoring from which they get credits for free-choice studies. Using study materials in foreign languages as well as taking part in courses taught in English are also recommended. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009b, 6.)

Indicators of Ministry of Education monitor and show the results of student mobility lasting over three months. Furthermore, they also monitor the quantity of teaching in a foreign language (both in Finnish and in foreign language degree programmes) and credits completed in studies abroad. Other indicators measure teacher and expert exchange, the amount of foreign degree students, attractiveness and perfusion of foreign language degree

programmes (by the amount of applicants, selected students and graduates) and the amount of students completing double-degree and joint-degree programmes. These indicators are monitored on a yearly basis and the fulfilment of the strategy is reported to the executive group of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences yearly. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009b, 7.)

In 2009, the number of outgoing students of Kajaani UAS for the whole academic year of nearly doubled (77 students) from the year 2008 (43 students). Outgoing students of Kajaani UAS for one semester remained on similar levels (129 students) from 2008 (134 students). (Kajaani University of Applied Sciences 2009, International Office.)

The amount of credits of teaching in foreign language in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences has tremendously increased from the year 2000 (118) to the year 2007 (414) (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009b, 9). See figure 3.

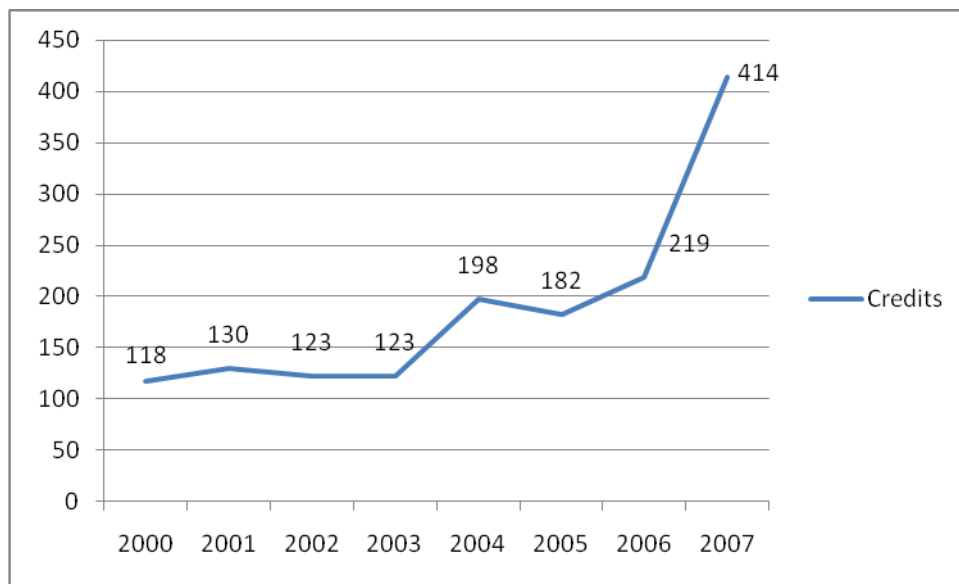


Figure 3: Teaching of Kajaani UAS provided in foreign language in credits

2.2.2 Student Exchange

Outgoing students

Studies abroad are part of student's degree at home university and should not prolong the normal time used to complete studies. Student exchange visits are always temporary and they follow the dates of the start and end of semesters in the receiving universities. During the exchange period students are able to receive a grant from Kajaani UAS. Students are able to participate in an exchange during the second year of studies at the earliest, after completing 45 credits. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a.)

Application process starts by completing an electronic form for international exchange in ASIO. ASIO is the electronical student admin system of Kajaani UAS where students are able to sign in through the website of Kajaani UAS with their student number and social security number. The application period for international exchanges is between weeks 2 and 11 every year if students apply for European countries and weeks 2 and 4 if students apply for non-European countries. If there are any places available after the first application period, a new application period will be arranged in autumn between weeks 36 and 39. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a.)

After the application period is over the International Co-ordinator and the International Office process all the applications. The applicants are then selected in the School's staff meeting. After this meeting the selected outgoing students must fill in the applications required by the receiving university. However, the final selection of exchange applicants is always made by the receiving university. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a.)

Participating in student exchange by utilising partner institutions of Kajaani UAS is the easiest, the most affordable and the most efficient option for students. Higher education institutions have made an agreement between each other so that students would have already an existing study placement at a university abroad and so that students do not need to go through a more complicated application process. Receiving institutions are also not able to charge tuition fees from students coming from partner institutions. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 4.)

Most commonly students are offered courses taught in English – however, one should bear in mind that some institutions provide courses only in a local language, for example in French, Spanish or Italian. Student exchange should be as long period as a minimum of three months and a maximum of 12 months and the starting and ending dates of academic year of receiving institution are carefully obeyed by the students going on exchange. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 4.)

Incoming students

Exchange students are students who wish to complete one or two semesters at Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. They normally come from the partner institutions of Kajaani UAS and through exchange programmes such as Erasmus. Normally they study in English-taught degree programmes or come for a period of practical training. Kajaani University of Applied Sciences has approximately 60 exchange students every semester mainly coming from European countries. Applying for exchange semesters can be done via online application system available from the website of Kajaani UAS. Before submitting the application form students however need to contact the international co-ordinator of their institution to be admitted an approval to complete study or practical training period in Kajaani UAS. (Kajaani University of Applied Sciences 2009a, 7.) Course schedules for English-taught courses for each academic year are available on the website of Kajaani UAS.

2.2.3 Practical Training Abroad

Students should start planning their practical training taking place abroad well beforehand – at least six months before the desired starting point of practical training. It often takes several months to confirm the final practical training placement for students. Students are advised to think carefully what they want to learn, what kind of goals they want to achieve and where they want to complete their practical training. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 4.)

Working abroad requires adaptation to different cultures as well as knowledge of local language of the destination chosen, even if English would be the main language at the

working place. Students are responsible for finding practical training places themselves. However, Kajaani University of Applied Sciences staff as well as the website and Electrical notice board provide information on companies offering practical training placements abroad. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 4.)

2.2.4 Training for Exchanges

Students going on international exchange are required to complete The Valtteri student and trainee exchange orientation course which is a virtual 3-credit study package. The purpose of the course is to prepare students for their exchange period, to deepen their knowledge of the destination country chosen as well as to make students more aware of issues concerning their country of origin. One part of the course is also to prepare students for returning back to Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 9.)

The Valtteri training package is available on Moodle e-learning environment on the web address: <http://moodle.kajak.fi>, from the course category 'Muut'. Students need an enrolment key to register themselves for the course. As soon as the application for exchange has been approved, student will receive the key to access the course. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 9.)

2.2.5 Exchange Programmes

Kajaani University of Applied Sciences takes part in several exchange programmes which provide funding for students, teachers and other staff exchanges abroad. In addition to these programmes, Kajaani UAS also has bilateral agreements which require funding provided by Kajaani UAS itself. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 5.)

Erasmus

The most extensive exchange programme for higher education institutions is the Erasmus Programme which was established in 1987. It concerns the European Union membership countries as well as for Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Turkey. Countries such as Switzerland and some of the Balkans are under negotiations to become part of Erasmus exchange programme. The programme provides funds for students for both student exchange and practical training abroad. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 5.) There are over 3 000 institutions in 31 countries (90 % of European higher education institutions) participating in the Erasmus Programme (CIMO 2008).

Students are also funded to take part in Erasmus Intensive Language Courses (EILC) which is meant to provide language training for more rare languages. The language courses are from 4 to 6 weeks and they are organised before the beginning of the actual exchange period in the destination country. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 5.)

In order to participate in the Erasmus Programme the higher education institution has to apply for the Erasmus University Charter which is granted by the European Commission. The European Policy Statement (EPS) is included in the Erasmus University Charter. It details the Erasmus plan of the university which describes how mobility and quality management are arranged within the applicant institution. In case the university also wishes to arrange practical training it has to be detailed in the EPS how these actions will be managed. On the basis of this an Extended University Charter may be granted to the university. Kajaani University of Applied Sciences has been granted the Extended University Charter for the whole duration of the programme. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a.)

The Erasmus programme is part of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme LLP 2007-2013. The aims of Erasmus are to improve the standard of education and training, to increase international co-operation between higher education institutions and to promote the mobility of students and staff. Furthermore, Erasmus improves co-operation between higher education institutions and working life and generation of innovations. In total, the Erasmus exchange is an experience which develops knowledge in languages, professionalism of participant's education and ability to work in a more and more internationalised world. (CIMO 2008.)

Nordplus

Nordplus is a Nordic student and teacher exchange programme through which students and teachers are able to spend an exchange period in Nordic partner higher education institutions. The networks between Nordic universities are the basis of Nordplus co-operation. These networks can yearly apply for operational funding which is then distributed further. The School of Health and Sports of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences is part of the EuroNord network which consists of educational institutions from Denmark, the Faeroes, Norway, Sweden and Finland. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 5.)

North-South-South

The network co-operation programme supports student and teacher exchange between higher education institutions of Finland and developing countries. Another target supported is visits preparing the network co-operation. The purpose of the programme is to create permanent contacts for co-operation between Finnish and developing countries' universities and thus enhance the economical and social development of developing countries. The programme complies with the UN Millennium Declaration and the objectives of the new development policy programme of Finland which mainly aims at abolishing extreme poverty. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 6.)

The School of Health and Sports of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences participates in North-South-South network co-operation through the project called 'Terve Afrikka' (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 6).

Other exchange programmes

With countries outside the European Union, such as China and Canada, Kajaani University of Applied Sciences mainly has bilateral agreements. In addition, a pilot programme of FIRST Finnish-Russian Student Exchange Programme began in 2000 and is based on co-operation networks between universities.

Students going on exchange to destinations which are not part of any official exchange programmes or bilateral agreements are 'free movers'. This means they have to search for a

study place at a foreign university themselves and must be prepared to pay student fees. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009c, 6.)

2.2.6 Partner Institutions

Kajaani University of Applied Sciences has a wide range of partnership universities around the world. It has more than 70 co-operating partner institutions in over 30 countries (APPENDIX 1). Each School of Kajaani UAS has its own partners in co-operation. Choosing one of the partner institutions of Kajaani UAS is easy, affordable and safe. Official agreements have been made between these institutions, which guarantees that students or teachers are not required to pay tuition fees when going on exchange. Kajaani University of Applied Sciences has also some partnership universities which help students find practical training placements within local companies at the destination. (Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu 2009a).

3 COMPARISON OF FINNISH AND ITALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEMS

According to the Chambers Encyclopedic English Dictionary, the word 'education' is defined as a process of teaching and training, usually beginning from infancy. Furthermore, education is defined as the instruction received and the process of training and improving (one's taste, etc.). (Allen 1994, 402). Relying on these words, education is seen as a normal, essential and crucial part of human's life, learning and development. Factors affecting education – people, culture, society, nature, community, work, politics and values – are in a continuous and rapid change. Therefore, it is also important for education to change in time to reflect the present state of the society. (Lehtisalo & Raivola 1999, 9.)

The key words in Finnish education policy are quality, efficiency, equity and internationalisation. Education is a factor for competitiveness. The highest education authority in Finland is the Ministry of Education which supervises all levels of education from primary education to university education. (Ministry of Education 2010.)

Finland has 20 universities in total which all apply academic freedom and autonomy. The universities are independent regarding their decision-making and all of them are run by the state with government providing 70 % of their budgets. Ministry of Education sector has also 26 universities of applied sciences which are run either by local authorities or by private foundations. They are financed in co-operation by both the government and local authorities. (Ministry of Education 2010.)

The main principles of Italian education system are defined by the Italian Constitution, stating that art and science are free and teaching of them shall also be free. The constitution also declares the right of individual citizens to higher education regardless of their financial situation. The main purpose of Italian higher education, as defined by law, is to promote scientific progress of the nation and to provide education and training for all citizens to make it lead to employment. (CIMEA 2003.)

The main institutional body of Italian education is the Ministry of Education, University and Research (Ministero dell'Isruzione dell'Università e della Ricerca, MIUR). MIUR promotes scientific and technological research as well as the development of universities and other

higher institutions with university status. Individual universities are allocated funds by MIUR and participation to EU and international programmes related to higher education and scientific and technological research are co-ordinated by MIUR. (CIMEA 2003.)

The comparison of Finnish and Italian education systems is examined more specifically below based on different stages of education.

3.1 Pre-higher education

There are slight differences between Finnish and Italian pre-higher education systems and therefore these systems are presented by viewing primary education and secondary education more specifically. The most significant results regarding the international PISA survey are also examined and compared between Finland and Italy.

3.1.1 Primary education

Children who permanently live in Finland have a statutory right and obligation to complete their comprehensive education. Nearly all children (99,7 %) do this and start their schooling at the age of seven. Before that, nearly all 6-year-old children attend to one-year voluntary pre-primary education. The principle is to guarantee basic educational security for all children in Finland irrespective of their place of residence, language and economic status. Basic schooling of nine years is free for all pupils. Children finish their first stage of basic education at the age of thirteen and then enter to the second stage of basic education which is completed when they turn sixteen. (Ministry of Education 2010.)

Primary education is usually provided in neighbourhood schools or arranged so that children would have an access to a school situated near their home. Schools co-operate with pupil's parents and pupils are able to have special-need education if needed. Teachers of basic education are highly educated. The Finnish school year has 190 working days, beginning in mid-August and ending in the beginning of June. The summer holiday is more than 60 days. (Ministry of Education 2010.)

The first stage of the Italian education system covers optional public free nurseries for children at the age of three to six, after which they begin primary school. In Italy, children start their primary school (*scuola di base*) usually at the age of six and continue it for seven years until they are thirteen year-olds. At this level of school their lessons usually last only for four hours per day and do not include sports, music or drama since those are regarded activities outside school. The educational curriculum is uniform to all pupils at this stage regardless whether children attend public or private schools. (Pybus 2005, 135.)

The academic year runs from September, October or November until the end of May. Some primary schools especially on the countryside of Italy may also be open on Saturdays; many parents work on shops and offices also on Saturdays. However, the schools are able to decide independently whether to open on Saturdays or not. (Pybus 2005, 135.)

The Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research states that studying other languages besides mother tongue is essential for children's educational and professional development. To follow the effective communication and educational mobility within the European community, elementary schools were re-organised including the study of modern languages, which mean any human language that is currently in use, such as French and Germany. The Italian authorities are also aware that studying languages and different cultures is essential in order to meet the needs of increasing immigration populations. Furthermore, it is important to encourage active participation of citizens in the global democracy. (StateUniversity.com.)

3.1.2 Secondary Education

The Finnish general upper secondary school consists of general and vocational education of which students choose either one. Both forms are commonly completed in three years (from the age of 16 to the age of 19) with a purpose to provide abilities for students to apply for universities and universities of applied sciences.

The general upper secondary school ends in a matriculation examination but does not provide any occupation, whereas after completing vocational school students are qualified with an occupation of their completed field of studies. There are some general upper

secondary schools which are specialised on certain subjects, such as arts, music or sports. The majority of Finnish upper secondary schools are run by local authorities. (Ministry of Education 2010.)

Vocational education has been designed to respond the needs of today's labour market and it includes at least one on-the-job learning period during which students gain practical experience of their chosen field of vocational studies. (Ministry of Education 2010.)

In Italy, upper secondary school covers the ages thirteen to eighteen with the first two years being compulsory general studies for all students. After this, during the last three years students specialise in studies which support their choices regarding further education in universities. At the end of the compulsory secondary education students take the examination and if it is passed successfully they are awarded by the *diploma de licenza media*. (Pybus 2005, 136.)

For specialisation after general studies students may choose to go to either vocational institution (*istituci tecnici*) or stay at their present school to continue more academic studies (*liceo classico* or *liceo scientifico*). At the end of their studies when students are 18 or 19 years old they all take a final exam (*esame di stato*). (Pybus 2005, 136.)

3.1.3 Comparison of PISA results

Finland has succeeded well in international comparisons of education, such as the OECD PISA (The Programme for International Student Assessment) survey. The programme assesses learning outcomes of students aged fifteen in mathematics, science, reading literacy and problem-solving. Finnish students were at the top of all lists and differences between schools, students and regions were relatively narrow. (Ministry of Education 2010.)

If comparing the results of PISA between Finland and Italy, Finland performed significantly better than Italy especially in reading and mathematics. A lower than average proportion of Italian students scored at the highest level of reading scale (5 %) while a higher than average proportion of them scored at the lowest levels of reading scale (9 %). The performance of Italian students concerning mathematical skills followed the same pattern with reading skills

and the mean PISA performance score of Italy was clearly lower than the OECD average. (Siniscalco 2006, 6.)

In the results of PISA 2003 survey there were significant regional differences between North and South of Italy. The mean performance scores of the two Northern Italy areas were crucially higher than the OECD average being on the same level with countries such as Sweden, Ireland and the Netherlands. On the contrary, the two Southern areas of Italy had a mean score similar to that of Turkey, having higher scores than only Thailand, Serbia, Mexico, Indonesia and Tunisia. The Centre of Italy was slightly higher than the Italian national average and there were no significant differences from the OECD average. (Siniscalco 2006, 8).

3.2 Higher Education

The Finnish higher education is free for all students and consists of two sectors: universities of applied sciences (formerly named as polytechnics) and universities. Finnish universities of applied sciences are multi-field regional institutions which focus on contacts with working life. They educate professionals in response to labour market needs and conduct research and development which promotes particularly regional development. However, the system of universities of applied sciences is still fairly new concept; first institutions began to operate in 1991-1992 on a trial basis. The first universities of applied sciences (during that time polytechnics) were made permanent in 1996. (Ministry of Education.)

There are 26 universities of applied sciences in Finland in the Ministry of Education sector. These institutions are authorised by the Finnish government who determines their educational mission, fields of education, location and the amount of students. Universities of applied sciences however have autonomy regarding their internal affairs. They are funded by the government, local authorities as well as other external sources. (Ministry of Education.)

Universities of applied sciences offer education for polytechnic Bachelor's and polytechnic Master's degrees, professional specialisation and other adult education as well as vocational teacher training on several fields of studies. Credit system (ECTS) is used and it takes 210-240 credits to complete the Bachelor's degree (3,5-4 years). (Ministry of Education.)

The main purpose of the Finnish universities is to conduct scientific research and provide undergraduate and postgraduate education based on it. According to the new Universities Act which has been applied since January 1st 2010 Finnish universities are independent corporations and their operations are built on the freedom of education and research and university autonomy. Universities provide Bachelor's and Master's degrees, postgraduate licentiate as well as doctoral degrees. (Ministry of Education.)

There are sixteen universities in Finland in the Ministry of Education sector. Studies in Finnish universities are quantified in credits (ECTS); the Bachelor's level consists of 180 credits and takes three years to complete. The Master's degree is additional 120 credits (two years) after completing the Bachelor's degree. (Ministry of Education.)

Although higher education has always been and is also currently free for all students, Ministry of Education has proposed a tuition fee of 1000 euros per year for students studying in higher education institutions. This was referred to be one way to precipitate students' graduation. The proposal was however cancelled before it was even made an official proposal to the Minister of Education. (YLE 2010.)

Another issue regarding tuition fees concerns foreign students coming outside the European Economic Area (EEA). During the years 2010-2014 Finnish higher education institutions are allowed to set tuition fees for university Master's Degree programmes in foreign languages or polytechnic Master's programmes. The experiment is applied at nine universities and at ten universities of applied sciences including 130 degree programmes in total. The institutions may define the amount of tuition fee themselves but they must have a grant system to support studies of a student participating in degree programmes liable to charge if needed. (Ministry of Education.)

The Italian higher education consists of two main articulations, university sector and non-university sector. All higher education is liable to charge and universities and other higher education institutions establish their own tuition fees. However, for university sector there is a legal minimum fee for enrolment and a maximum level for student contributions to costs and services, which cannot exceed 20 % of the state funding. The average fee is approximately 850-1000 euros per year and varies between universities as well as depends on the chosen field of studies. Tuition fees in private universities are naturally higher. (MIUR.)

Universities in Italy are authorised by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research. There are currently 77 institutions which have a university status – including both public and private institutions. Private universities have to obey the same educational adjustments as the public universities and thus the degrees completed in both of them are equal. (CIMO 2004, 18.)

Due to the new reforms of university education in 1999, universities nowadays apply academic qualifications organised in three cycles: Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies and Post-graduate Studies. The first cycle (undergraduate studies) lasts for three years, consists of 180 credits and leads to a Bachelor's Degree. The second cycle, graduate studies, includes Master's Degree Programs and First Level Master Programs. Master Degree Programs last for two years, require 120 credits and are awarded with Master's Degree, whereas First Level Master Programs last for one year, consist of 60 credits and lead to First Level Master's Diploma. The third study cycle, post-graduate studies, includes Doctoral Degree Programs, Second Level Master's Programs as well as Specialisation Programs. The minimum period of studies for Doctoral Degree Programs is three years and the degree leads to a Doctoral Degree. Second Level Master's Programs last for one year, require 60 credits and the final certificate is a Second Level Master's Degree. The length of Specialisation Programs varies depending on the chosen field of studies and the final certification awarded is a Specialisation Diploma. (CIMEA 2003.)

Italian universities also use the ECTS as do the Finnish higher education institutions. The main aim of the credit system is to make studies more student-focused, to reduce the gap between official and real length of courses as well as to decrease the drop-out rate of students. One credit equals 25 hours of student work and includes contact teaching, individual studying, exam preparation as well as presentations and other group works. (CIMEA 2003.)

Universities in Italy are able to make independent decisions regarding tuition fees. In state universities the tuition fees may vary from 450 - 2000 euros per year depending on the degree studied. Private universities usually charge higher tuition fees. (CIMO 2004, 8.)

Studying methods of Italian universities are similar to those applied in Finnish universities. Students are required to complete wide amount of their work independently without much

supervision from members of faculty. However, the lectures are often over-crowded in both Finnish and in Italian universities. (Pybus 2005, 137.)

In addition to universities, the non-university sector of Italy includes four education typologies with their institutions. Higher schools of design consist of polytechnics for arts, academies of fine arts, higher institutes of applied arts, music conservatories among other similar institutes. The non-university sector also has higher education in language mediation, higher integrated education (programmes of higher technical education and training) as well as a few specific fields of studies, such as diplomatics, restoration and military studies. (MIUR.)

3.2.1 Education provision in English language

Due to the Bologna Process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area the European academic institutions have taken further steps towards internationalisation of students and staff. Student mobility is not the only goal – a larger scale process concerning integration of the European academic institution is under a continuous progress and improvement. Naturally it is more fertile for students to study abroad at an institution providing courses which are linguistically accessible for international students – usually this means courses available in English. (CRUI 2008, 3.)

Finland has been one of the most active countries in Europe offering degree programmes in foreign languages. However, if considering the amount of foreign degree programme students studying in Finland, the country has been less active on this scale. Although the number of foreign students completing full degree programme in Finland has been increasing during the whole beginning of the 21st century, the proportional number of higher education students (4 %) is still below the average of the OECD countries (6,9 %). (Garam 2009, 2.)

During the last few years the degree programmes in foreign language have increased in Finnish higher education institutions. Most of these are entirely in English language but there are few degree programmes in Swedish language as well. The most crucial growth has

been in the Master's level programmes – from 2005 to 2008 the number of Master's degree programmes in foreign language has increased from 88 to 178. (Garam 2009, 5.) See table 2.

Year	In total	Bachelor	Master	Doctoral
2005	160	62	88	18
2006	203	85	98	20
2007	232	69	142	21
2008	287	86	178	23

Table 2. Degree programmes in foreign languages in Finnish higher education institutions 2005-2008.

According to the Survey on Education Provision in English Language in Italian Universities in the year 2007 there were 16 universities which provide undergraduate (first-cycle) degree programmes or single undergraduate courses in English language. Most of these degrees and single course units are part of faculties of economics. Availability of graduate (second-cycle) degree programmes or single units in English language includes 21 universities in total, mostly in the faculties of engineering, economics and sciences. Furthermore, 24 universities in Italy provide Research Doctorate Programmes entirely in English, related to physical and natural sciences as well as medical and engineering fields. (CRUI 2008, 4-6.) See table 3.

	No. of universities	No. of courses
Bachelor degree programmes or single units	16	-
- of which at least one full degree programme available	8	12
Master degree programmes or single units	21	-
- of which at least one full degree programme available	14	38
Research doctorate programmes	24	189

Table 3. Education opportunities in English in Italian universities in 2007

3.2.2 Student Financial Aid

The Social Insurance Institution of Finland, KELA, provides financial aid for full-time students studying in universities or universities of applied sciences. Also upper secondary school students and vocational school students are eligible to study aid from KELA beginning from turning 17 years. Studies abroad are also granted if they are equivalent to studies entitling to financial aid in Finland. International students are eligible to student aid in case their purpose of staying in Finland is other than studies and in case they are permanent residents of Finland. (Ministry of Education.)

In Finland the student financial aid consists of a study grant, a housing supplement and state guarantee for a student loan. The amount of aid depends on student's age, housing form, level of education and means-testing. At higher education level, means-testing usually concerns student's own income and on other levels of education also student's parents' is taken into account. Higher education students are also able to buy meals at a subsidised price in student restaurants and cafés. (Ministry of Education.)

In Italy, both local and international students are entitled to have the same student financial aid. This applies to scholarships, student loans, housing assistance as well as meals in student restaurants. These services for students are arranged by the DSU Office (*Diritto allo studio*

universitario). The DSU Offices also provide other services such as counselling and information on extracurricular activities, sport, transport as well as other practical matters. (MIUR.)

The financial benefits provided by the DSU Office consist of both ordinary and special grants, grants for research work regarding dissertations and final degree projects as well as grants to support post-graduate studies. Students applying for grants must give a proof of possessing adequate merit to be qualified for receiving student financial aid. (MIUR.)

3.3 Discussion and Conclusion

There are both similarities and differences in Finnish and Italian education systems. One of the most significant differences is the age of leaving school (compulsory education) which is sixteen in Finland – and due to reforms of Italian education system in 2000, eighteen in Italy. One of the basic reasons this reform was implicated was to prevent many children in the South of Italy to quit school at the age of fourteen in order to try to find a job especially in poor families. (Pybus 2005, 134.)

It is however a complex situation to make studies compulsory for such a long time, if considering the need of human resources on occupations for which long periods of education is not required. The Italian young people might still need to be working after school hours to earn money which only makes it more difficult for them if they have to be at school during daytime. In Finland the school leaving age of sixteen seems to be sufficient since the percentage of student drop-outs from education in total was rather low 7,9 % in 2007. In comparison, the same percentage for Italy was nearly 20 % in 2007. The EU average rate of school drop-outs after compulsory education was approximately 15 % in 2007. (Ministry of Education 2009a, 5.)

The learning outcomes of students aged fifteen varied significantly between Finland and Italy. Italian students were not performing on the same level with Finnish students regarding for example reading and mathematical skills. Finland was at the top of all lists and differences between schools and regions were not remarkable, whereas North and South of Italy showed vast disparities. The reasons for the significant differences between North and

South Italy were said to be deeply referring to the roots of the history and culture of Italy. However, the disparities between Italian regions cannot only be explained by differences in the socio-economic and cultural status of students and schools. (Siniscalco 2006, 12.)

There are a few similarities regarding higher education systems in Finland and in Italy. Both of the countries have applied the Bologna Process by arranging university studies in the three-cycle system: undergraduate studies, graduate studies and post-graduate studies. Furthermore, ECTS was used in both of the countries to integrate work load measurement. Universities both in Finland and in Italy have departments and faculties for different fields of studies. Student financial aid was also provided in both of the countries on the difference that Finland provides the aid mainly for local students, whereas in Italy it is possible also for international students to receive grants.

To conclude the state of English-taught degree programmes and single units, Finnish higher education institutions were more active than those of Italy to arrange teaching in English. Traditionally, the state of Italy has preferred to preserve the state of Italian language, to be the most important language of education and communication on the whole.

A conclusion of the complete Finnish education system is provided on APPENDIX 2 and the Italian education system is concluded APPENDIX 3. In addition, a complete conclusion of the comparison of both Finnish and Italian education systems is presented in table 4.

	Finnish Education	Italian Education
Age of starting school	7	6
Age of finishing school	16	18
PISA results	clearly above average	below average
Percentage of drop-outs	7,9 %	approx. 20 %
ECTS applied in higher education	yes	yes
University studies	three-cycle	three-cycle
Tuition fees	no	yes
Studies in English in higher education	advanced	potential
Student aid provided	yes	yes

Table 4. Conclusion of the comparison of Finnish and Italian education systems

4 THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIP CO-OPERATION

The main aim of the thesis was to develop international and educational co-operation between Kajaani University of Applied Sciences and Italian universities. Practically this meant finding solutions to activate student exchange towards Italy and vice versa. Kajaani UAS has earlier made partnership contracts with two Italian universities, University of L'Aquila in L'Aquila and University of Cassino in Cassino. According to the few students who had participated in student exchange for these universities, there had not been sufficient amount of courses provided in English or other practical issues such as difficulties in finding apartment had emerged during their exchange period. Therefore, there has not been outgoing exchange students from Kajaani UAS going for student exchange to the Italian partnership universities during the recent years.

This was the basic reason and background for the idea of the thesis. It also included a possibility to attain an entirely new partnership university from Italy. The basic assumption was that there are students in Kajaani UAS who wish to participate in student exchange by choosing Italy as their primary destination. Providing an opportunity for students to spend a semester or two in a receiving Italian institution and getting sufficient amount of study credits were required to be guaranteed.

Since the number of Finnish students or international degree students speaking Italian is rather low, the first requirement for the partnership institutions was a sufficient amount of courses offered in English. Most preferably the institutions were required to have courses in tourism, secondly courses in business and thirdly courses in sports. Another important requirement for institutions was, besides taking part in the Erasmus Programme, to assist incoming exchange students regarding practical matters such as housing and possible tutoring among other relevant student activities.

The entire process of developing co-operation in student exchange consisted of several phases and took fairly a long time with a rather limited schedule. In the beginning, potential sources to find information on higher education institutions in Italy were searched and collected together. These sources included lists of higher education institutions in Italy which participate in the Erasmus Programme, a list of Italian higher education institutions

providing education in English, Italian authorities of education and internationality, former exchange students from Italy having studied in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences as well as current Italian partnership universities of Kajaani UAS. After collecting all the sources available, the potential institutions and other parties were directly contacted in order to receive replies preferably as soon as possible.

4.1 Sources

There were several different sources utilised to find information on suitable higher education institutions in Italy. The first source used in the process was a list of higher education institutions in Europe participating in the Erasmus Programme. The list was received from the International Office of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences and it included 191 Italian higher education institutions in total.

Researching through the list of institutions was completed by checking websites of the institutions listed one by one. The first requirement for a new potential partnership institution was the fact it had a website also available in English. This matter was referred to the requirement of courses taught in English and furthermore to the need of students to be able to have services in English at the school area. Surprisingly plenty of Italian institutions had an English website and even courses listed in English – however, the issue was they were only listed in English while the actual language of teaching was still Italian. Moreover, the courses offered in English were mostly concerning business and engineering studies, whereas the first priority was to find English taught courses in tourism. Another remark concerning the list was that there were plenty of institutions in Italy offering studies in fine arts and music – which are a traditional part of the Italian culture.

Another list of Italian institutions participating in the Erasmus Programme in 2010-2011 was received from CIMO (Centre of International Mobility). The list was mostly similar to the list received from the International Office of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences, despite few new additions to institutions of fine arts. CIMO also reported they do not have information concerning Italian institutions providing courses in English – the Erasmus list was their most suitable reference.

Third list of higher education institutions was a survey completed by CRUI (Conference of Italian University Rectors) regarding the provision of education in English language in Italian universities. The survey was found from MIUR's (Ministry of Education, University and Research) website provided in English for foreign students wishing to study in Italy (<http://www.study-in-italy.it/index.html>). The result of searching through the list was a total lack of courses in tourism. However, the list included the same universities as CIMO's list providing few business courses in English.

In addition to the different lists of Italian higher education institutions, several other sources were used to collect information concerning potential partnership institutions and internationality in Italian higher education institutions in general. The most important parties contacted were MIUR (Ministry of Education, University and Research), CRUI (Conference of Italian University Rectors), CIMEA (Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence), CINECA (Interuniversity Consortium) and the Italian Embassy in Helsinki. They all were sent an e-mail regarding strategy for internationalisation in Italian higher education institutions and information on courses taught in English language in Italian universities.

Also the current Italian partnership universities of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences in L'Aquila and in Cassino were contacted by email in order to receive information on the present situation of the courses provided in English and other matters concerning incoming exchange students. Especially the current situation of the University of L'Aquila was under concern because of the earthquake that occurred in the city of L'Aquila on the 6th April 2009. The earthquake was rated 5.8 on Richter scale – more than 300 people lost their lives and 30 000 people were left homeless. Recently the authorities have announcement it may take approximately 10 years for life to return to normal in L'Aquila. (BBC, 2010.)

The local Erasmus Student Network of L'Aquila, Aquilasmus, was also contacted to collect more information on issues concerning incoming exchange students and to report the current matters regarding the recovering of the city of L'Aquila.

Furthermore, former Italian exchange students of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences were contacted to gain information from which universities they came from to study in Kajaani. In addition, another purpose was to learn about their experiences concerning their

home universities and international facilities related to them. During the last four years, there has only been few Italian exchange students studying in Kajaani UAS – on the whole, the student exchange between Finland and Italy has not been active in Kajaani UAS.

4.2 Contacting new potential partnership universities in Italy

Based on the lists received from the International Office of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences, CIMO and CRUI, there was basically only one university in Italy that fulfilled all the requirements set. Free University of Bozen in Bolzano had a website in English and courses taught in English available in tourism, business and sports studies. This university was multilingual (English, German and Italian) and internationally oriented institution. It was contacted by email introducing Kajaani University of Applied Sciences and the city of Kajaani as well as the student responsible for the project of attaining a partnership institution from Italy (APPENDIX 4). Later the university was also contacted by telephone to receive information on current news regarding the request for co-operation and information on courses taught in English as well as other student facilities.

Furthermore, since there appeared to be very few Italian higher education institutions providing courses in English especially for tourism studies, a back-up plan of also accepting institutions having courses taught in English in business studies was implemented. Although the main focus was to find a partnership institution especially for tourism students, there are also business studies included in the Degree Programme in Tourism of Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. Therefore, institutions having business courses in English language were also taken into consideration and thus the Bocconi University (Università commerciale 'Luigi Bocconi') in Milan and LUISS Guido Carli University (Libera università degli studi sociale) in Rome were also contacted. These universities had extensive lists of business courses taught in English and both of them also had at least one whole degree programme in business in English.

4.3 Replies

Received replies were collected either by email or by telephone interviews. Receiving the replies was rather a challenging issue and unfortunately not all the parties contacted were able to reply or give any further information.

4.3.1 New potential partnership universities

Free University of Bozen

The International Office of Free University of Bozen forwarded the partnership co-operation request to their Faculty of Economics. When the university was further contacted by telephone, no current news was received regarding the request. However, it was informed that it is not possible to have partnership contract anymore for the following academic year 2010-2011 but the academic year 2011-2012 would be taken into consideration.

It was confirmed the university has courses provided in English language for tourism, business and sports studies – with the difference that tourism and sports courses were held in a different location (Brunico) than business courses (Bolzano). Train journey from Bolzano to Brunico was informed to take approximately 1,5 hours. The university had currently several exchange students; assisting in finding accommodation as well as organising student activities was reported to be provided.

Bocconi University

The university informed to be currently fully satisfied with the supply of student exchange opportunities in relation to demand of their students. However, it was suggested that in case there are students from Kajaani UAS wishing to study at Bocconi university they could apply as fee-paying visiting students for Single Courses (free-mover exchange). Single Courses (Corsi Singoli) is a programme offered to students who wish to study at Bocconi but are enrolled in a university which does not belong to the student exchange network of the Bocconi University. Students are offered a wide range of courses to choose from including both the Undergraduate and Master level course portfolios. The enrolment fees

for academic year 2009-2010 included a fixed payment of 200 € and 170 € for each credit of the courses selected (for example, a course of 5 credits would cost 850 €).

4.3.2 Italian authorities

CINECA (Interuniversity Consortium) which consists of 40 Italian universities and is made up by MIUR was not able to give either further information concerning strategy for internationalisation within Italian higher education institutions or information on universities providing education in English. However, CINECA advised to contact CIMEA (Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence) to receive more information concerning matters requested.

According to CIMEA, there was a specific strategy for internationalisation concerning higher education institutions run by the Ministry of Education, University and Research. However, the strategy itself was not mentioned to be published or accessible anywhere for public use. Referring to the Bologna Process Template for National Reports 2007-2009 contributed by MIUR and CIMEA, all university Bachelor and Master degrees were structured according to the degree system of the Bologna Process. Another reform accomplished was the percentage of the total number of higher education programmes in which all programme components are linked with ECTS credits (100 %). Furthermore, according to the report by CIMEA, 12,7 million euros were used each year to provide grants for student mobility. In addition, 10 % of the accommodation available for students was reserved for international students. More specific information on the implementation of the Bologna Process in Italy is provided in Chapter 5.4.1.

Italian Cultural Institution under the Italian Embassy in Helsinki advised to search for strategy for internationalisation on the CRUI website. Links given for certain universities providing tourism courses and entire degree programmes in English were all concerning Master level education. The University of Milan IULM was informed to run Master of Tourism Management, the MIB School of Management of Trieste organised an International Master in Tourism and Leisure in English, University Bocconi of Milan offered a Master of Economics in Tourism in English – this university was already been contacted regarding Bachelor level courses. In addition, the International School of Tourism Sciences

in Rome was also mentioned to exist for tourism studies. Unfortunately this institution does not participate in the Erasmus Programme and therefore it could not be utilised as a potential partnership institution. A comprehensive list of all universities concerning tourism studies in Italy was also provided by the Italian Cultural Institution but it included only courses taught in Italian language.

4.3.3 Current partnership universities

According to the Associate Professor of International Economics of the University of L'Aquila, the institution was hosting approximately 80 Erasmus exchange students in spring 2010 notwithstanding the destruction of the earthquake. However, the university believed their ability to decently host incoming exchange students would further improve by next year (2011). On the contrary, the prospects regarding courses taught in English were still rather uncertain due to possible cuts in the budget of the university. The estimation was a minimum of two courses in English per semester. For example, in autumn semester there would be courses in Corporate Finance and Economic Policy and in spring semester courses in Business Organisation and International Trade. However, as a compensation for the lack of courses taught in English, there were a number of courses taught in Italian for which foreign students were allowed to take exams in English.

University of Cassino was rather difficult to reach within several efforts of sending emails and contacting by telephone. However, after numerous efforts of contacting, replies were received still not much information included in them.

4.3.4 Erasmus Student Network in L'Aquila (Aquilasmus)

The president of the ESN L'Aquila, Aquilasmus was referred by a current local student of University of L'Aquila who had participated in student exchange for Kajaani UAS in spring 2009. Aquilasmus informed to host currently approximately 20 exchange students. The incoming exchange students were helped to find accommodation by Aquilasmus in the first place since Aquilasmus is a member of a voluntary Students Helping Students Association. Recently they have however encountered problems in finding accommodation for exchange

students due to the earthquake of L'Aquila in spring 2009 – even all local inhabitants did not have housing yet. Currently the exchange students have had to be accommodated in Avezzano, a city 60 kilometres away from L'Aquila. Only three of the students had a possibility to have a room from L'Aquila itself in the academic year 2009-2010. According to the president of Aquilasmus, the city was slowly recovering from the earthquake and the city centre was still not rebuilt back to normal. However, the university was informed to be active and fully working.

4.3.5 Former Italian exchange students of Kajaani UAS

There have only been five exchange students from Italy studying in Kajaani University of Applied Sciences during the last four years. Names of the students were received from the International Office and they were personally sent message to inquire information regarding their home universities in Italy. All of the students replied and most of them were from the University of L'Aquila. All of the students from L'Aquila were aware there are few courses provided in English at their university and they knew there had been exchange students every semester, mainly from Spain, Poland and France. There was also mentioned to exist an Erasmus Student Network called 'Aquilasmus' in L'Aquila. However, the students thought their home university was not as organised regarding student issues as universities in Finland. In Cassino there was briefly mentioned to be exchange students from all over Europe.

In total, all the former Italian exchange students had enjoyed their student exchange period in Kajaani UAS to a great extend, mainly due to the special supporting student spirit between the exchange students, student activities organised by the Student Union KAMO and the sufficient amount of courses provided in English.

5 RESULTS

The overall process of developing partnership co-operation in student exchange with Italian universities resulted in discovering new crucial facts regarding the partnership development. In addition to the new potential partnership universities, the current Italian partnership universities of Kajaani UAS were also examined concerning the situation of courses provided in English as well as other matters regarding incoming exchange students. Furthermore, referring to information collected from Italian authorities such as CINECA under MIUR, CIMEA and Italian Embassy, a strategy for internationalisation for Italian higher education institutions was researched to form an overall conclusion regarding the effectiveness of implementation of the Bologna Process as well as provision of university degrees and courses in English language.

5.1 New potential partnership universities

Free University of Bozen in Bolzano was the most potential institution for a new partnership university for Kajaani UAS. The university had courses in tourism, business and sports studies conducted in English and it had years of experience in hosting exchange students. It is however important to notice that tourism and sports studies were arranged on a different location than business studies. The latest news was the Faculty of Economics was still making decisions regarding possible co-operation with Kajaani UAS. However, if co-operation will be agreed upon later, it will be possible not before the academic year 2011-2012.

Another opportunity for student exchange was provided by the Bocconi University in Milan. Despite no partnership co-operation, it was possible to apply as a visiting student by paying a fixed fee of 200 € followed by 170 € for each credit of the courses chosen. This would however become rather expensive for students who wish to complete approximately 20-30 credits per semester.

Comparison of the courses provided in English with suggestions for compensation of compulsory courses in Kajaani UAS is completed in Chapter 5.3 .

5.2 Current partnership universities

The situation of University of L'Aquila was discovered to be rather unstable and uncertain in relation to the courses taught in English and other student facilities, especially finding accommodation for exchange students. According to the volunteer ESN association Aquilasmus, most of the exchange students had to be accommodated outside the city to another city nearby L'Aquila since even the local residents were still lacking housing after the earthquake.

However, a positive result concerned the local student association, Aquilasmus (ESN L'Aquila). Aquilasmus worked actively and reported to plan and organise several student activities for exchange students on their free time. Trips were organised around the whole Italy, for example to Naples and Rome, to a chestnut-fair in a town in the region of Abruzzo called Sante Marie, to an amusement park near Ravenna and also to Sicily. Furthermore, Aquilasmus organised meetings for Italian language learning, weekly reviews of Italian movies with Italian subtitles as well as conferences in order to promote the Erasmus Program among Italian students. In addition, there were also parties organised for exchange students, mostly with a theme.

In the academic year 2009-2010 most of the exchange students which University of L'Aquila hosted came from Turkey and France. However, during the previous years there had been exchange students also from Spain, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Portugal, UK, Belgium, Finland, Germany and Luxembourg. In addition, the university had a number of foreign students regularly enrolled in their courses, coming from countries such as Albania and Moldova.

University of Cassino had approximately 60 exchange students and it reported to assist incoming exchange students in finding housing. Exchange students were announced to be able to attend Master Programme courses held in English although exchange students are most often studying on Bachelor level themselves. Furthermore, the Master level courses were relatively broader by their contents (mostly 10 credits) than courses studied in Kajaani UAS on Bachelor level and therefore it would be difficult to compare the compensation of them.

5.3 Comparison of courses provided in English

Free University of Bozen provided the latest list of courses for Economics and Management, Tourism Management and Sport and Event Management for the academic year 2009-2010. The courses were compared in relation to the compulsory courses offered for Business and Tourism students in Kajaani UAS and suggestions for possible compensation were made according to the courses provided in each school (see Tables 5 and 6). Courses provided for Sports students were identified to differ from the focus of courses offered in Kajaani UAS; Free University of Bozen was more focused on managing sports events whereas Kajaani UAS emphasises on sport guiding and coaching. However, the list of courses taught in English in Sports and Event Management in Free University of Bozen is provided on Table 7.

Generally, most of the courses in Free University of Bozen were broader than similar courses in Kajaani UAS in relation to the the amount of ECTS credits. Therefore, in addition to compulsory courses, the extra credits received from Free University of Bozen could be compensated by free choice studies of Kajaani UAS.

Free University of Bozen		Business of Kajaani UAS	
Name of the course	ECTS	Name of the course	ECTS
Introduction to Academic Writing	5	Academic Writing	3
Commercial Law	6	International Business Law	3
Financial Accounting	n/a	Financial Accounting	5
Statistics	6	Statistics	4
Marketing	7	Services Marketing	3
Economic Policy	6	Economics/International Economics	4/3

Table 5. Compensation of courses in Business

Free University of Bozen**Tourism of Kajaani UAS**

Name of the course	ECTS	Name of the course	ECTS
Communication Skills and Strategy	5	Intercultural Communication	3
Economics and Management of Travel Agencies	5	Tourism Economics	3
Tourism Marketing	5	Marketing of Tourism Services	3
Strategic Marketing for Tourism	5	Marketing Communication	3
Tourist Services Management	5	Hospitality Management	3

Table 6. Compensation of courses in Tourism

Free University of Bozen: Sport and Event Management

Name of the course	ECTS
Economics	5
Introduction to General Management	5
Communication Skills and Strategy	5
Marketing	5
Event Management	5
Sports and Events Marketing	5
Sports Facilities Construction	5

Table 7. Courses offered in English in Sport and Event Management

For Bocconi University it was possible to be enrolled as a visiting student paying tuition fees required. Visiting students were offered the possibility to enrol themselves on Single Courses targeted to exchange students. The university had rather an extensive list of courses provided in English - especially for Business students there are several similar courses to compensate. Comparison was made for both Business and Tourism students (see Table 8). Information on ECTS credits was not available from Bocconi University.

Bocconi University	Business of Kajaani UAS	Tourism of Kajaani UAS
Strategy in Creative Industries	Strategic Management (3 cr)	Strategic Management (5 cr)
International Law	International Business Law (3 cr)	Law Studies (5 cr)
International Relations	Intercultural Communication (3 cr)	Intercultural Communication (3 cr)
Sales Management	Selling and Sales Management (3 cr)	-
Management	Introduction to Management (5 cr)	Management of Nature and Activity Services 1 (4 cr)
Corporate Finance	Finance (3 cr)	-
Marketing Research	Marketing Research (3 cr)	-
Marketing Communication	Advertising and Marketing Communication (3 cr)	Marketing Communication (3 cr)

Table 8. Compensation of Business and Tourism courses taught in English

University of L'Aquila predicted to organise a minimum of two courses per semester provided in English during the academic year 2010-2011 as follows: Corporate Finance and Economic Policy in the autumn semester and Business Organisation and International Trade in the spring semester.

Referred to the list of courses provided for Business and Tourism students studying in English degree programmes of Kajaani UAS, the potential of replacing the courses provided by University of L'Aquila was noticed to be possible. It was suggested by following table how the courses could compensate each other (see Table 8). There were no more specific course descriptions available on the website of University of L'Aquila and therefore the suggestions of the compensation were done based on author's own information and experiences regarding studies in Kajaani UAS. For Sports students of Kajaani UAS there were not found to be any similar courses which could be compensated.

Mainly the courses able to be compensated are normally completed during second or third year of studies at Kajaani UAS. Few courses, such as Introduction to Business Operations are usually completed during the first year but in case for example missing the course, there was a possibility to compensate it during the student exchange period. All the English taught courses offered in University of L'Aquila were worth 5 ECTS credits, whereas most of the similar courses provided by Kajaani UAS were 3 ECTS credits.

University of L'Aquila	ECTS	Business of Kajaani UAS	ECTS	Tourism of Kajaani UAS	ECTS
Corporate Finance	5	Finance	3	Bookkeeping and Financial Statements	5
Economic Policy	5	Economics/ International Economics *)	4/3	Tourism Economics	3
Business Organisation	5	Introduction to Business Operations *)	3	Introduction to Business Operations *)	3
International Trade	5	International Marketing	5	Marketing Communication	3

(* The course is usually completed during the first year of studies whereas exchange period is possible only after finishing the first year (minimum of 45 credits) in Kajaani UAS.

Table 9. Compensation suggestions of courses provided by the University of L'Aquila

5.4 Strategy for internationalisation in Italian higher education institutions

Strategy regarding internationalisation in higher education institutions in Italy was mostly concerning the evaluation of development and implementation of the Bologna Process. More specific and separate strategy was available for public use and therefore, the results concerning internationality matters were mainly focused on the aspect of implementation of the Bologna Process.

5.4.1 Implementation of the Bologna Process

5.4.1.1 Integrating university education system

The main implementations of the Bologna Process concerned integrating the first and the second cycle of university studies (Bachelor and Master levels). In practice this meant all university Bachelor and Master Degrees were structured according to degree system of the Bologna Process. The adoption of the 3+2 years system includes three years of Bachelor level studies (180 credits), followed by two years of specialisation for Master level education (120 credits). After completing the Master Degree, students were given the access to third cycle Doctorate programmes.

Another reform implemented concerned ECTS - currently the total of 100 % of higher education programmes, programme components and learning outcomes were linked with ECTS credits. This implementation was rather a positive fact regarding the higher education system in Italy and it will significantly help the overall aim of the Bologna Process to create a European Higher Educational Area (EHEA).

5.4.1.2 International mobility

12,7 million euros in total were used each year to provide grants for student mobility. Several higher education institutions also reserved a certain amount of their budget to integrate the existing grants (such as Erasmus) or to create new mobility opportunities. Usually these grants were allocated following specific criteria based on socio-economic conditions, success in studies, destination and disabilities.

The Ministry has also given more resources to the higher education institutions which were more successful in organising study periods abroad and joint/double degrees, in attracting foreign students and in promoting mobility amongst Italian students. In addition, 10 % of the accommodation available for students in Italy was reserved for incoming international students. Even though this was not enough to cover the demand of the accommodation requested by international students, the higher education institution staff usually supported students coming from abroad to find housing.

All study periods abroad were recognised once sufficient official documentation was provided by the student. However, it was admitted not all higher education institutions could provide an example of good practices as suggested by the guidelines of the Bologna Process – however, these practices were more and more applied in the system.

The amount of international students in Italian universities has always been rather limited. Therefore, the attractiveness of Italian university education within the framework of the EHEA was promoted in the following ways:

- “Marco Polo” programme was created and launched by CRUI, aiming at promoting cooperation between Chinese and Italian universities
- Fellowships for India: the Ministry invested 1,5 million euros for 100 fellowships, 15 000 euros per each
- Italo-Chinese University: the Ministry of Education in cooperation with certain Italian universities, a few private companies, and two Chinese universities (Fudan University in Shanghai and the University of Tongji) launched a project to promote the education and training in management of both Chinese and Italian students.

Joint degrees were also mentioned specifically in legislation – it was fully allowed to establish and award joint programmes. A joint degree is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate. The percentage of institutions involved in joint degrees was 50-75 % and joint programmes 75-100 %. However, mostly the second and the third cycles of university studies were involved in joint programmes/degrees on the field of social sciences (31 %) and engineering and architecture (25 %).

Certain actions for internationalisation were proposed in the three latest plans for the development of the Italian university system up to 2006. The Ministry has made available financial resources and has given guidelines for the development of bilateral and multilateral projects leading to joint degrees. The three main typologies of internationalisation actions were summarised as follows:

- supporting international student mobility
- using ECTS system and Diploma Supplement
- participation of teachers and students from at least another country

- co-financing of projects (50 %) by higher education institutions
- quality assurance

5.4.2 Provision of university degrees and courses in English

Based on the research of the lists of higher education institutions participating in the Erasmus Programme and having courses taught in English, there were only few universities which provided Bachelor level courses in English language in tourism and/or in business studies. Business courses and degree programmes in English language were more common than tourism courses or degrees in English.

On the contrary, there were more universities found and referred providing Master level education in tourism studies in English – even a few entire degree programmes in tourism. The University of Milan IULM was informed to run Master of Tourism Management which is entirely taught in English. The MIB School of Management of Trieste organised an International Master in Tourism and Leisure in English. University Bocconi of Milan offered a Master of Economics in Tourism in English – this university was already been contacted regarding Bachelor level courses. The International School of Tourism Sciences in Rome was also mentioned to operate for tourism studies. Unfortunately this institution did not participate in the Erasmus Programme and therefore it could not be utilised as a potential partnership institution.

6 CONCLUSION

The process of developing partnership co-operation in student exchange between Kajaani University of Applied Sciences and Italian universities appeared to be rather a broad and challenging but nonetheless an interesting topic for thesis. There were several new ideas discovered to develop student exchange further with Italy.

In addition, understanding the reasons for less student mobility between Kajaani UAS and Italy were solved. It was rather difficult to search for updated information on Italian websites and to receive replies and information from many Italian parties. Another issue was the information regarding strategy for internationalisation in higher education institutions in Italy. In comparison, there was a clear general Strategy for Internationalisation in Higher Education Institutions provided by Ministry of Education in Finland for the period of 2009-2015 (see Chapter 2.1.1). The strategy had clear missions and goals and it was accessible for everyone interested. In addition to the general strategy, higher education institutions of Finland had their own separate strategy for internationalisation where aims, goals and the implementation stage were defined more specifically (see Chapter 2.2.1).

The main language of teaching in Italian universities is naturally the official language of the country, Italian. Finding institutions providing courses in tourism and business in English language on Bachelor level appeared to be rather challenging. Generally, the Italian people prefer to communicate in their mother tongue and the Italian government also promotes the importance of Italian language.

It is highly recommended to stay in contact with the Free University of Bozen. The university has courses in tourism, business as well as in some sports studies and furthermore, communication with them was not a problem at any stage, which created an image of a well organised institution. Bocconi University could be considered in case students are able to receive additional funds, grants or awards from external sources, such as the Joint Authority of Kainuu Region Kainuu (if an applicant has lived in Kainuu region for the last five years) to finance the tuition fees required.

There is also potential in the University of L'Aquila – the ESN L'Aquila was taking an active effort to make incoming exchange students feel welcome in L'Aquila. However, since the city of L'Aquila was still slowly recovering from the earthquake of the spring 2009, it is difficult to predict how soon it would be recommended to send outgoing students there from Kajaani UAS. Furthermore, if the University of L'Aquila will be able to provide more courses in English in the future, it could be possible for students receive and compensate a sufficient amount of credits during the student exchange period.

As for University of Cassino, the current list of courses provided in English appeared promising. However, since the courses were taught on Master level, it is rather questionable if exchange students of Bachelor level could participate in the courses. In addition, the overall communication with University of Cassino was rather not fruitful or successful – therefore, it raised a question how they are hosting incoming foreign exchange students there on the spot.

For further actions to develop partnership co-operation with Italian universities, it is recommended to promote Kajaani University of Applied Sciences in the 22nd Annual EAIE Conference in Nantes, France in the autumn 2010 (<http://www.eaie.org/nantes/>). The EAIE (European Association for International Education) is a non-profit organisation whose main goal is to activate and facilitate the internationalisation of higher education in Europe and around the world. It has more than 1 800 members of international education professionals from rectors to professors to international exchange co-ordinators and thus it is a worldwide network of professionals in the international higher education field. (EAIE.)

Another recommendation to advertise Kajaani UAS for further developing of partnership co-operation is to participate in Italy Education Fair in autumn 2010 in Naples, Italy (<http://webaconnect.ning.com/events/italy-education-fair-2010>). The fair represents one of the most important student recruitment exhibitions in Italy and expects approximately 80 000 visitors. Several international institutions from Europe attend the event, including Italian universities such as Bocconi University and LUISS Guido Carli University, which were both contacted in relation to this thesis as well.

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APPENDIX 1: PARTNERSHIP INSTITUTIONS OF KAJAANI UAS

School of Engineering

ENSICAEN, Caen, France

Fachhochschule Südwestfalen, Meschede and Soest, Germany

Fachhochschule Lausitz, Senftenberg, Germany

Westsächsische Hochschule Zwickau, Germany

Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, Windisch, Switzerland

University of Huelva, Huelva, Spain

Don State Technical University, Rostov-on-Don, Russia

Hochschule Aalen, Aalen, Germany

University of Northumbria at Newcastle, Newcastle, Great Britain

Camosun College, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

School of Business and Tourism

Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands

Saxion University of Applied Sciences, Deventer, The Netherlands (tourism)

Katholiege Hogeschool Leuven, Heeverlee, Belgium

Tallinn University, Tallinn, Estonia (sports/tourism)

Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Madrid, Spain

University of Huelva, Huelva, Spain

University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland

Institute of Technology, Carlow, Ireland (games programming)

University of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland

University of Teesside, Tees Valley, Great Britain (games programming)

University of Central Lancashire, Preston, Great Britain

The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Great Britain

Northumbria University, Newcastle, Great Britain

Università degli studi dell'Aquila, L'Aquila, Italy

Università degli studi di Cassino, Cassino, Italy (to be deleted from the list)

FH Technikum Kärnten, different cities, Austria
FH Kufstein Tirol, Kufstein, Austria
Kansai Gaidai University, Osaka, Japan
Camosun College, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
Lethbridge College, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics, Nanchang, China
Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics, Hangzhou, China
Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul, Korea
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
RISEBA – Riga International School of Economics and Business Administration, Riga, Latvia
International Business School at Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania
Klaipeda College of Social Sciences, Klaipeda, Lithuania
Vilnius Business College, Vilnius, Lithuania
Finnmark University College, Alta, Norway (tourism)
University of Rzeszów, Rzeszów, Poland (also tourism)
Université Pierre Mendès-France, Grenoble, France
Université de Caen Basse-Normandie, Caen, France
ESDES School of Management, Lyon, France
Mittuniversitetet, Department of Social Sciences, Östersund, Sweden
Gotland University, Visby, Sweden
University of Skövde, Skövde, Sweden (also games programming)
Hochschule Albstadt-Sigmaringen, Albstadt-Sigmaringen, Germany
Fachhochschule Giessen-Friedberg, Giessen, Germany
Hochschule Harz (FH), Wernigerode, Germany
Hochschule Heilbronn, Heilbronn, Germany
Fachhochschule Lausitz, Lausitz, Germany
Fachhochschule Neu-Ulm, Neu-Ulm, Germany
Fachhochschule Südwestfalen (Meschede & Soest), Germany
Hochschule Zittau/Görlitz (FH), Zittau ja Görlitz, Germany
Westfälische Hochschule (FH), Zwickau, Germany
Fachhochschule Aalen, Aalen, Germany
Hochschule Bremen, Bremen (tourism, only in German)
University of Maribor, Maribor, Slovenia

Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, Windisch, Switzerland
Akdeniz University, School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Antalya, Turkey
Ceus School of Business, Leisure Management, Nykoebing Falster, Denmark (tourism)
International Business School, Budapest, Hungary
King Sigismund College, Budapest, Hungary
Finlandia University, Hancock, MI, USA
Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI, USA
Moscow State University of Technology 'Stankin', Moscow, Russia
Institute for Design-Technological Informatics RAS, Moscow, Russia
Tver College of Chemical Technology, Tver, Russia
St. Petersburg State Polytechnical University, St. Petersburg, Russia
North-West State Technical University, St. Petersburg, Russia
Petrozavodsk State University, Petroskoi, Kostamuksha, Russia
Don State Technical University, Rostov-on-Don, Russia

School of Health and Sports – Nursing

Sjukraröktarfrödiskuli, The Faroe Islands
The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Great Britain
FH Technikum Kärnten, different cities, Austria
Technological Educational Institution (T.E.I.) of Athens, Athens, Greece
University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia
Høgskolen i Sør-Trøndelag, Trondheim, Norway
University of Rzeszów, Rzeszów, Poland
Mittuniversitetet, Östersund, Sweden
University of Maribor, Maribor, Slovenia
Esbjerg CVU-Vest Sygeplejerskeuddannelsen Vejle Amts sygeplejeskole, Denmark
Ondokuz Mayıs University, Samsun, Turkey
Adiyaman University, Adiyaman, Turkey
University of Debrecen, Medical and Health Science Center, Nyiregyháza, Hungary
Health Africa Development Co-operation Organisation, Uganda and Kenya

School of Health and Sports – Sport Instructors

Northumbria University, Newcastle, Great Britain

FH Kufstein Tirol, Kufstein, Austria

Sendai College, Sendai, Japan

Camosun College, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Finmark University College, Alta, Norway

University of Rzeszów, Rzeszów, Poland

Mittuniversitetet, Östersund, Sweden

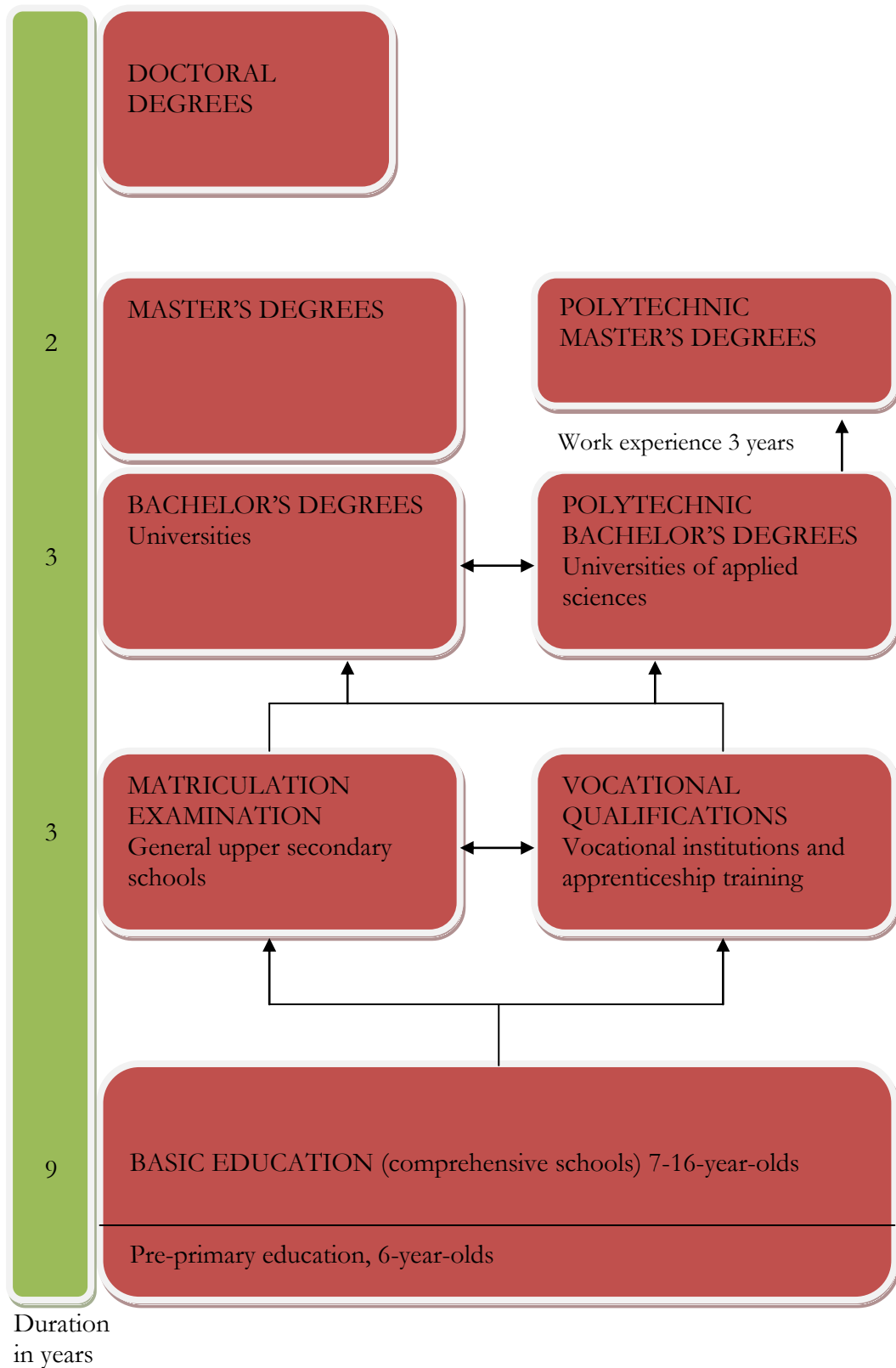
Akdeniz University, Antalya, Turkey

College of Nyiregyháza, Nyiregyháza, Hungary

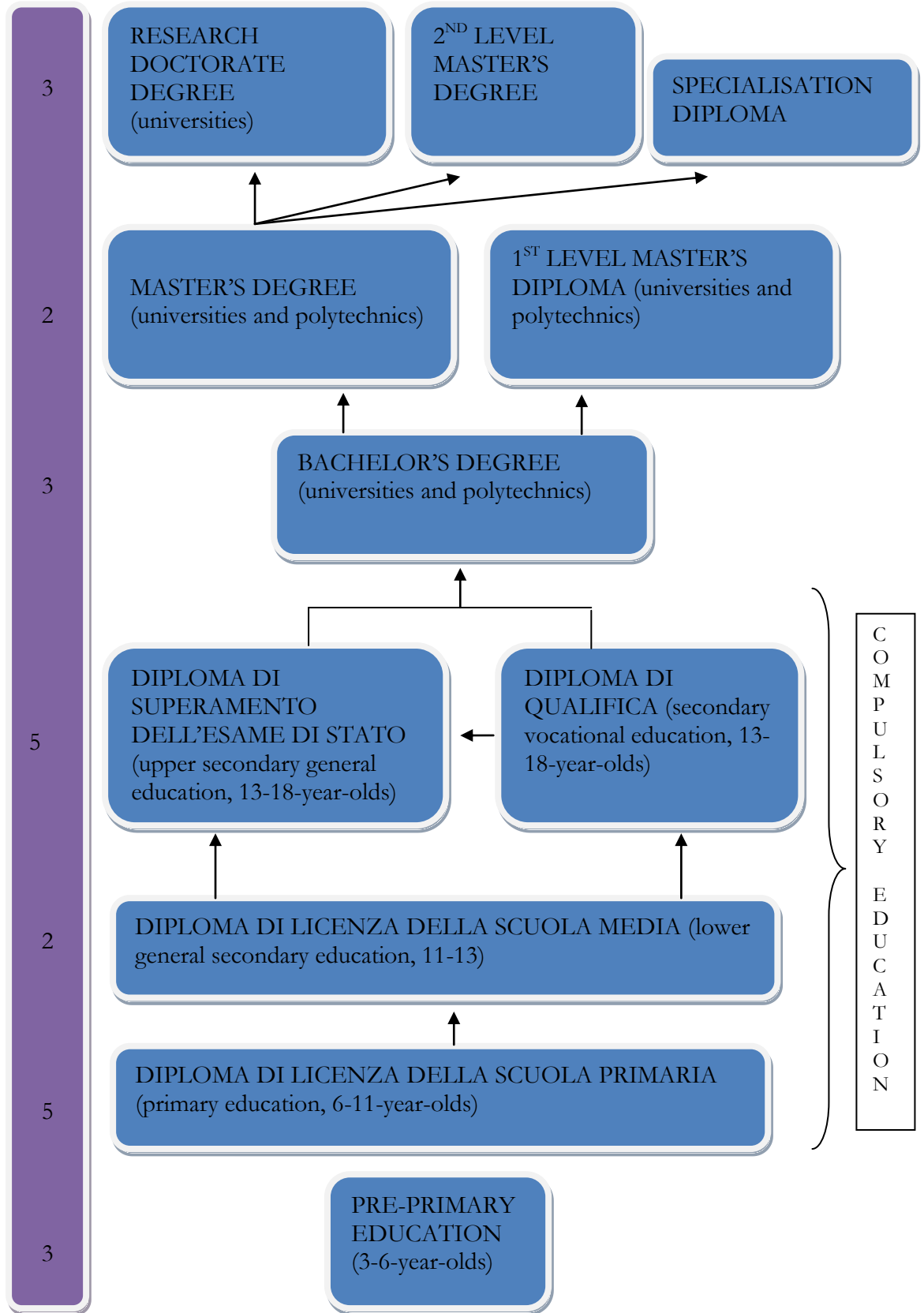
Northern Michigan University, USA

Tallinn University, Tallinn, Estonia

APPENDIX 2: THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM



APPENDIX 3: THE ITALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM



Duration in years

APPENDIX 4: E-MAIL SENT TO THE POTENTIAL ITALIAN HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Mari Koskelo and I am a 4th year tourism student from Finland, Northern Europe. Currently I am writing my bachelor's thesis for Kajaani University of Applied Sciences and I am sending this e-mail on behalf of our institution in order to ask for your university's interest to be a partner institution for student exchange with our university of applied sciences. Our institution would be very delighted to have lively student exchange between Italy and Finland.

Kajaani University of Applied Sciences has about 2000 students and 200 staff. We have currently three degree programmes taught in English: Tourism, International Business and Sports and Leisure Management. Our institution participates in the Erasmus exchange programme and we have around 60 incoming exchange students every semester. International students are helped to find apartments and our Student Union KAMO is very active in organising various activities for students during academic year. Our institution is located in short walking distance from the town centre of Kajaani which is a lively student town with 5000 students in total.

If your institution is interested in co-operating in student exchange with our institution, please feel free to contact me as soon as possible. You may also contact our International Affairs Planning Co-ordinator Ms. Meira Kaikkonen in order to receive more information.

Best regards from the snowy town of Kajaani, Finland,

Ms. Mari Koskelo
Degree Student in Tourism
mmt6tmarisk@kajak.fi
Tel. +358 44 577 0742

Ms. Meira Kaikkonen
International Affairs Planning Co-ordinator
meira.kaikkonen@kajak.fi
Tel. +358 8 6189 9617